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HOUSE BILL NO. 465

Offered January 10, 2024

Prefiled January 8, 2024

A *BILL to amend and reenact § 24.2-112 of the Code of Virginia, relating to election administration; deputy general registrars; recommended number.*

Patron—Runion

Referred to Committee on Privileges and Elections

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 24.2-112 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 24.2-112. Deputy registrars; employees.

A. The State Board shall adopt guidance for determining the recommended number of deputy registrars, including a recommended number for a county or city based on the size of the county's or city's population as of the most recent decennial census. The electoral board of each county and city shall determine the number of deputy registrars to serve in the office of the general registrar, including any to serve full-time, but such number shall not exceed the number recommended by the State Board for a county or city with its population. In any county or city whose population is over 15,500, there shall be, at a minimum, one deputy registrar who serves at least one day each week in the office of the general registrar, and in any county or city with a population of 15,500 or less, there shall be, at a minimum, one substitute registrar who is able to take over the duties of the general registrar in an emergency and who shall assist the general registrar when he requests.

In Russell County, there shall be at least one full-time deputy registrar who shall serve in the office of the general registrar.

In any county or city whose population is over 15,500, there shall be at least one deputy registrar who shall serve at least one day each week in the office of the general registrar.

Any county or city whose population is 15,500 or less shall have at least one substitute registrar who is able to take over the duties of the general registrar in an emergency and who shall assist the general registrar when he requests.

If the electoral board of any county or city determines that a greater number of deputy registrars are needed than the number fixed for such county's or city's population and if approved by majority vote of the local governing body of such county or city, additional deputy registrars may be appointed.

B. The electoral board shall set the term for the deputy registrars; however, their terms shall not extend beyond the term set by law of the incumbent general registrar. The general registrar shall establish the duties of deputy registrars, appoint deputy registrars, and have authority to remove any deputy registrar who fails to discharge the duties of his office.

All deputy registrars shall have the same limitations and qualifications and fulfill the same requirements as the general registrar except that (i) a deputy registrar may be an officer of election and (ii) a deputy registrar shall be a qualified voter of the Commonwealth but is not required to be a qualified voter of the county or city in which he serves as deputy registrar. Candidates who are residents in the county or city for which they seek appointment may be given preference in hiring. Localities may mutually agree to share a deputy registrar among two or more localities. Deputy registrars who agree to serve without pay shall be supervised and trained by the general registrar.

All other employees in the office of the general registrar shall be employed by the general registrar. The general registrar may hire additional temporary employees on a part-time basis as needed.

C. The local governing body of each county and city shall fix and pay the compensation of any paid deputy registrar, other than those who agree to serve without pay, or and any other employee of the general registrar shall be fixed and paid by the local governing body and, except that the governing body shall be responsible for paying the compensation of only the number of deputy registrars permitted by the State Board for a county or city with its population and any additional number that have been approved by a majority vote of the governing body as set forth in subsection A.

The compensation of any paid deputy registrar and any other employee of the general registrar shall be the equivalent of or exceed the minimum hourly wage established by federal law in 29 U.S.C. § 206 (a)(1), as amended.

D. The general registrar shall not appoint to the office of paid deputy registrar his spouse or any person, or the spouse of any person, who is his parent, grandparent, sibling, child, or grandchild.

2. That the provisions of the first enactment of this act shall become effective on January 1, 2025.

3. That the Department of Elections shall convene a work group to advise and collaborate with the

INTRODUCED

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59 State Board of Elections on the development of guidance for determining the recommended
60 number of deputy registrars for counties and cities within prescribed population ranges, in
61 accordance with the provisions of subsection A of § 24.2-112 of the Code of Virginia, as amended
62 by this act. The work group shall include representatives of the Virginia Association of Counties,
63 Virginia Municipal League, Virginia Electoral Board Association, and Voter Registrars Association
64 of Virginia. The work group shall begin its work no later than July 1, 2024, and shall complete its
65 work and make public the adopted guidance no later than December 1, 2024.